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# **National Intelligence Bulletin**

DIA review(s) completed.

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December 24, 1975

**No 669**

25X1

Approved For Release 2005/06/01 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028400010041-1

Approved For Release 2005/06/01 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028400010041-1

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### LEBANON

Syria and Lebanon may have agreed, during Prime Minister Karami's visit to Damascus on Monday, to take more forceful action to restrict the flow of arms to the warring parties in Lebanon.

Generally reliable press reports say that the plan to limit the flow of arms is part of a wider understanding that includes plans for implementing the cease-fire, resuming high-level negotiations on political reform, and holding a meeting of Syrian and Lebanese heads of state.

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President Franjiyah has been hoping that President Asad will invite him to Damascus to meet with Saudi King Khalid tomorrow. Franjiyah probably calculates that such a meeting would help him politically, even if it did nothing to end the fighting in Lebanon. A Lebanese official has said that Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasir Arafat may also join the group.

Franjiyah and Asad have not met since January, before the troubles of 1975 began. A meeting of the two has been under consideration for some months as a possible means of stimulating progress in the endless political negotiations.

Asad may abandon any plans to meet with Franjiyah, following allegations by Lebanese Christian leaders this week that Syrian or Syrian-controlled Palestinian forces have joined in the fighting in Lebanon. Both Damascus and the PLO have denied these charges.

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### CUBA

Cuba's involvement in the Angolan civil war is not the only case of Cuban activity abroad, although it is by far the largest.

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Cuban subversive efforts in this hemisphere declined sharply after the debacle in Bolivia in 1967 when Che Guevara was killed. Havana's interest in Africa—already evident in the early 1960s—became more apparent in 1965 when Guevara led a group of some 100 men conducting guerrilla warfare in Zaire (then Congo-Leopoldville) from bases in Tanzania.

After 1965, the number of Cubans serving with African guerrilla organizations fluctuated.

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By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the nature of the Cuban assistance changed as new leftist governments came to power in Africa in need of the kind of assistance Cuba could give. The number of Cubans rose as they took on a new range of responsibilities—from technical and economic tasks to political and administrative duties. Still, in many cases, they continued to perform military or paramilitary chores.

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In the Far East, the Cubans have given assistance to the communist regimes in Vietnam and Laos. During the war, a number of Cuban military men were in North Vietnam. Others sent to Hanoi included doctors, nurses, medical technicians, and construction workers.

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After the war, a dozen or so of the medical personnel were shifted to Laos, and the number of Cuban construction workers in North Vietnam was increased to about 500 men and women.

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Cuba's commitment in Angola differs significantly from these other Cuban efforts abroad in that the Cubans in Angola include troops sent to take part in direct combat. In the only other occasions when Cuban troops were sent abroad in large numbers—to Algeria in the early 1960s and to Syria after the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli war—they were not sent to the front lines but were used in rear areas to free locals for combat duty.

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### LAOS

The Soviet Union has begun to airlift food and petroleum from Hanoi to Vientiane to help make up shortages caused by the closure of the Thai border. An AN-12 made its first delivery to Vientiane on December 22. Soviet officials in Vientiane say that the airlift will continue as long as necessary.

The Soviets had hoped also to move supplies by air from Bangkok to Vientiane. The Soviets had apparently claimed that these supplies would be used by their embassy. Thai Foreign Minister Chatchai, however, on December 22 told the press that he would permit such an airlift only after the border is reopened. Chatchai said that the border could be reopened after Thai and Lao officials meet to discuss the continued influx of refugees from Laos, the smuggling of arms into Thailand, the smuggling of commodities from Thailand into Laos, and "other problems."

Lao Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Phoun Sipraseut on Monday publicly ruled out any talks until Thailand reopens the border and "sincerely displays a friendly attitude of true neighborliness." He admitted that the border closure had caused serious economic difficulties in Vientiane, but added that several socialist countries had agreed to transport fuel, milk, and sugar to Laos. Phoun said that a convoy of Vietnamese vehicles had already delivered some fuel and other supplies and claimed that new deliveries from and through Vietnam will enable the Lao to cope with shortages.

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### PORTUGAL

New appointments to Portugal's all-military Revolutionary Council appear to complete the purge of leftists from the highest levels of the armed forces, while at the same time serving notice that the military does not intend to abandon altogether its political role.

The vacancies on the Council resulting from the dismissal of two leftist navy officers following the military uprising on November 25 have been filled by two navy officers who also serve as cabinet ministers. An all-night meeting of the Revolutionary Council that ended yesterday morning confirmed commanders Almeida e Costa and Vitor Crespo and approved the economic austerity measures adopted by the cabinet earlier.

Both officers are staunch anti-Communists, but their appointments are otherwise seen as maintaining the balance on the Council between the so-called political officers, who are led by Foreign Minister Melo Antunes, and the "professionals," who seem to be gravitating toward newly appointed army Chief of Staff Eanes.

The "professionals" tend to put more emphasis on the need for strict discipline in the armed forces and dedication to their military function. The Antunes group, on the other hand, seems intent on carving out a continuing political role for itself.

These differences have already resulted in some heated discussions in the Council and will probably continue to do so as the officers seek to work out a new pact with the political parties on the military's role in government and politics. There is increasing talk among the more professionally oriented officers that members of the Antunes group should be made to choose between a political or a military career, although the consensus seems to be that the decisive confrontation need not come before the parliamentary elections expected some time next year.

Differences between the two groups appear, moreover, to be largely a matter of degree; even the "professional" officers are unwilling to give the civilian politicians a free hand. The point of divergence comes on whether the military should lead the nation to "democracy and socialism"—as Antunes maintains—or should merely provide order and stability and let the people decide whether they want socialism.

The recent squabbling among politicians will help to confirm the officers in their belief that the military must continue in at least a limited role in government if anything is to be accomplished.





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In his holiday address to the nation last night, Azevedo underlined the important role the military plays in arbitrating disputes in the government. The military cannot return to the barracks, he said, until political parties achieve greater "political maturity."

Quarrels among the political parties over representation in the cabinet have also risen again. Popular Democratic leader Sa Carneiro told a party rally on Monday that the proposed reorganization of the Azevedo government, which would give the Socialists four ministers, the Popular Democrats three, and the Communists two, was unacceptable because it would double Communist representation.

The Socialists as well as Foreign Minister Antunes have no argument with Communist representation. They contend the Communists should participate in the government in order to share the blame for the economic austerity measures that must come. Most reports, however, have indicated that party representation would remain essentially unchanged.

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### USSR

On Monday, the Soviets launched a satellite with the international designator Statsionar 1. The spacecraft, also called "Raduga" by the Soviets, was placed into a stationary orbit over the Indian Ocean. According to a Tass announcement, the satellite will relay uninterrupted 24-hour telephone, telegraph, and both color and black and white television signals.

Since 1970 the Soviets have planned to place a geostationary communications satellite, Statsionar, in orbit over the Indian Ocean to relay domestic communications and TV programs. Statsionar 1 may in fact be this satellite. Earlier this year, the Soviets announced plans to launch three additional geostationary communications satellites in 1975-76; Statsionar T, 2, and 3, to be located over Africa and the Indian Ocean. These satellites are intended to provide communications and TV broadcast services to Eastern Europe and the USSR.

The Soviets have also recently announced further plans to implement a global geostationary communications satellite system providing telecommunications services similar to those of Statsionar 1. Although that system will bear some resemblance to the 91-nation International Telecommunications Satellite Organization network, it will not have comparable performance.

Soviet objectives with respect to the use of this system are unknown. This series of Statsionar launches would take place between 1978 and 1980 and would consist of seven stationary satellites positioned over the Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific oceans. This would be an ambitious undertaking, and judging from the Soviets' past track record, may not occur on schedule.

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Approved For Release 2005/06/01 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028400010041-1

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Approved For Release 2005/06/01 : CIA-RDP79T00975A028400010041-1

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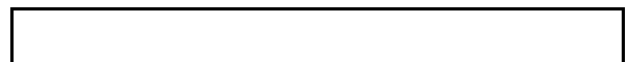
**ARGENTINA:** The settlement that ended the air force rebellion on December 22 reportedly calls for a limit on President Peron's tenure, possibly as short as 30 days. Although the rebels' only confirmed success was the forced retirement of the air force commander, their move has apparently united the military in working for Peron's removal. [REDACTED]

### Peron's removal

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